

Harrison Talgo, Sr.
PO Box 47
Bylas, AZ 85530

October 21, 2011

The Honorable Eric Cantor
United States House of Representatives
303 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4607

Dear Majority Leader Cantor:

I am the former Chairman of the San Carlos Apache Nation and served in the Tribal Council for 16 years. Many times I have come before Congress as an official representative of my government to present issues affecting and in the best interest of the San Carlos Apache Tribal Government. But today I write to you as a concerned private citizen of Bylas, Arizona which is located within the San Carlos Apache Tribal Reservation and want to express my support of H.R. 1904, The Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act of 2011.

The current Tribal leadership does not share my position. I have tried very hard to understand why they oppose this project when we are in such desperate need of jobs and industry. I believe that traditional Apache values are not mutually exclusive with economic development.

We are one of the poorest Indian tribes in the nation. Seven in ten eligible workers in the Tribe are unemployed. Almost 80 percent of our people live in poverty. Alcoholism and drug use are rampant and suicide rates are high. The average Apache male has a life expectancy of 54 years, about 20 years shorter than the average American male.

The proposed Resolution Copper Mine would bring hundreds of new, high-paying jobs to our region. It represents progress and hope and prosperity.

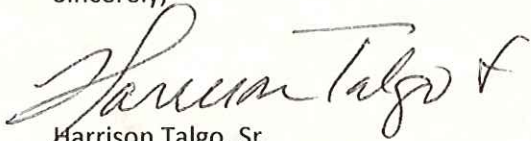
I have previously testified before Congress in support of economic development projects. I have done so in the face of opposition from other leaders who have opposed these same opportunities on and near the reservation. Some of those projects experienced costly delays as a result of the Council's opposition, but they all were built eventually. And to our benefit, they have all hired Apaches. I am confident the Resolution project will be no different. In fact, some members of the San Carlos Apache Nation are already employed by the company and its contractors.

I respect the Council's desire to protect sites that have cultural or historical significance. I want that, too. But Oak Flat is a long way from us, and I believe strongly that it is possible for our traditional values to co-exist with economic progress. In fact, I don't believe one can survive without the other. Economic progress and prosperity leads to a better standard of living, better health, better services and better education. It increases our capacity to learn and expands our cultural horizons. It gives us additional resources to explore and study our past, to protect what we hold sacred, to showcase and display those things that are culturally important, and to help the outside world better understand and appreciate the stories and traditions of our fathers.

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For all these reasons, I respectfully urge your support and passage of the H.R. 1904.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Harrison Talgo, Sr.", followed by a small flourish.

Harrison Talgo, Sr.
Former Chairman, San Carlos Apache Nation

Cc: Representative Paul Gosar